

The Spark Gap

MARC

Volume 17

ISSUE 5

The Skywarn Controversy:

FYI,

1lie Johnson County Skywarn Net has moved to
the 511 Repeater System Indianapolis has been

notified, and they concur with our plans
For more information, visit
www.qsl.net/511/skywarn.html

Johnson County Independent Skywarn Group
4/21/2000
KB9RRN
KB93RQ

E-Mail to Mark Shaffer N9GDR from Jim Sellers K9ZBM

From: James Sellers [mailto:k9zbm@gte.net]
Sent: Sunday, April 23, 2000 8:51 AM
To: ddc@iquest.net; jparker@iquest.net;
n9siu@ard.net; mark shaffer
Subject: Re: Johnson County Skywarn

Dear Mark,

When you last wrote me, I was afraid that
you(we) had not heard the last of Josh KB9TRQ.
Im sorry to hear of this latest incident involving
Johnson Co.

As the Emergency Coordinator for
SKYWARN(Central Indiana), feel free to resolve
this situation in the best interests of SKYWARN,
the Amateur Radio Set, service, and the National
Weather Service. If your suspicions about this
individuars action are correct, then some action
must betaken. You have my complete support in
any and all actions to resolve this that you deem
appropriate. If it seems reasonable, a personal
visit from you with a witness might be a good
approach. Your judgment about this is, of
course, your best guide

Good Luck, and please keep me informed.

73,
Jim Sellers K9ZBM

E-Mail from Mark N9GDR to Josh KB9TRQ:

From: mark shaffer [mailto:n9gdr@iquest.net]
Sent: Monday, April 24, 2000 5:13 AM
To: kbgrq~kbgrm.cjb.net

Cc: aagoe@iquest.net; msmith32@home.com;
kaSypx@ix.netcom.com; mdcxi@wildolive.com;
smelmike~iquest.net; ddc@iquest.net;
k9zbm@gte.net; jparker@iquest.net

Subject: Re: Johnson County Skywarn

Josh, I would ask that you forward my response
to Dennis, KB9RRN as well.

I was quite suprised to receive this e-mail
concerning the activities of
Johnson County Skywarn, so please bear with
me and read my entire response

First of all I appreciate your energy in wanting to
participate in SKYWARN activities. However I
must advise you that going out on your own and
starting an independent operation is wrong.

I want to explain to you why your approach is
wrong and why it will force me as SKYWARN
coordinator to ignore any reports that are not
generated within the current recognized structure
surrounding the 146.835 repeater

You realize that dung severe weather, a single
operation in each county providing information to
the NWS is crucial. It is impossible for just
anyone in each county who decides they would
like to "do their own thing" to start an
independent operation In other words, how many
reports would we have of tornado's or is it the
same tornado seen by multiple stations At this
critical time the amount of confusion this creates
would be tremendous and thus drag down our
response time to the NWS. Contrary to your
claims, on your Web page. of saving lives, this
degradation of response could kill someone or
put them in harms way

I have seen this problem first hand a couple of
years ago when the NWS received telephone
calls from a county, from some "independent
hams*", during a severe weather net. 'mess took
time from the busy forecaster who at that point
doesn't[have time because groups can't work
together. I was able to talk to them

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during this time and told them to participate within the organized structure of their county or cease operation.

The National Weather Service does not have the time, nor do they care about amateur radio politics nor the differences that may exist between groups they want to have one point of contact and then however we operate our networks is up to us. So it is my duty as SKYWARN coordinator to pro-4de this structure to them, I feel it is not responsible to set up each county organization because I am not familiar with everyone. Each county ED, or RACES officer, or EMA director, or club president has the responsibility to provide that organization. A good example of that is in Madison county, they have a structure that is blessed by their EMA director and hystorically over the years has provided us with the BEST information and has the most reliable operation I have seen. I wish that all of our counties operated this way, but they do not..

I urge you and Dennis, in the strongest terms, to stop this independent move. It not only hurts amateur radio in your county but causes confusion and gives our customer, the NWS, reason to doubt our resolve in providing the information we do to them

Remember as a customer you want to walk into a store and get what you are looking for with the minimum amount of hassle, the NWS is no different. We must strive to continue to improve our delivery of servces to the NWS to keep them from going somewhere else for this information.

In closing, I understand there have been some problems with the 146835 machine. I also know that these are not "random" events and may have been created by others to discredit that operation. I hope that all hams in Johnson County will work together to solve this situation because it is in my opinion that the FCC does not tolerate this type of activity especially during emergency communications.

Please continue to work within the 146.835 Skywarn system. I repeat that unless I hear from the EC, or RACES officer, or EMA director, I will ONLY take reports from the 146.835 group and will IGNORE all other reports from Johnson County. I will be forwarding this to all of my staff of operators along with the Indiana Section ARRL SEC as well to keep them informed of changes, get involved, work within the structure, If you have any questions, please feel free to e-mail me.

73's

Mark

At 10:11 PM 0412112000-0600, you wrote:

>Mark,

>Please note that the Johnson County Skywarn Net has moved to the 14511 KN9E Repeater, PL 88.5 Hz.

>For more information, visit

hffip://www.qsl.net/511/skywarn.html

>73's,

>Josh

>KB9TRQ

Courtesy of Jack Parker W8ISH-

Just a thought from me: I hope this will clear up the differences of the Sky Warm net location. It is the WA9RDF

146.835Repeater .

WA9ZET AI

Restructuring:

AMATEUR RADIO SURVIVES TRANSITION TO RESTRUCTURING

Despite dire predictions from some quarters, the "Big Day"~Saturday, April 15, 2000 dawned with nary a "10-4" a "roger beep" or "echo box" to be heard on the Amateur Bands. During the first weekend of restructuring, fledgling Generals and Extras were out in force on the HF bands, trying out their upgraded privileges and proudly appending the required "ictedm AG" or "intedm AE" to each ID.

Amateur Radio has passed another milestone in its long history without incident. For the first time in more than 60 years, applicants for an Amateur Radio license seeking full HF privelages didn't need to take a 13 WPM or higher Morse code exam.

ARRL Hudson Division Director Frank Fallon, N2FF, was among those urging veteran hams to put out the welcome mat to all newcomers "They will need to learn things that have never been part of any FCC test,"

he said in an open message published in the division newsletter, ~le Hudson Loop. Fallon advised experienced hams to be generous with their help, to be tolerant of mistakes and to be "friendly and tactful when you offer suggestions for improvement."Meanwhile, the ARRL-VEC team doesn't need any restructuring reminders. It's been dealing with an increased influx of applications for the past three months.

"You're a little early. It's taking about a month," Assistant to the ARRL-VEC Manager Wayne Irwin, W1KI, tells a newly upgraded caller whose new privileges have yet to show up in the FCC database or in his mailbox despite having tested March 22

Irwin points out that VE teams have 10 days to get their paperwork into the mail or shipped to the ARRL-VEC. The 10 days does not include transit time to ARRL, which can be a week or more. The ARRL-VEC has an FCC-imposed 10 day deadline to check over the paperwork and send the files electronically to the FCC. But the volume of activity as a result of upgrade fever has put things behind the dime. Although it's hired on extra help, ARRL-VEC is still struggling to keep up. "The phones ring relentlessly with inquiries, and the e-mail runneth over," says ARRL-VEC Manager Bart Jabeke, W9JJ.

Over the weekend, thousands of hams took advantage of strategically scheduled upgrade and paperwork processing VE sessions, including some held at the stroke of midnight. Jabeke says he's gotten word of individual sessions with as many as 135 attendees. ARRL-VEC alone had nearly 250 separate sessions registered for April 15, so he's expecting an additional paperwork avalanche this week.

Ready to go applicants turned out for the Utica, Shelby Emergency Communications

Association's effort to be the first to offer amateur exams under the new rules. The club began administering tests at the stroke of midnight during its special VE session in Mt. Clemens, Michigan. Club spokesperson Paul Valko, W8KC, says the first one in the door was William "Captain Bill" Hearer, KB8QMP, who directs the Mt. Clemens Salvation Army center where the upgrades took place.

Among ARRL Headquarters staff members caught up in the restructuring upgrade wave are Penny Harts, N1NAG, Carole Dimock, N1NAM and Mary Maryland, N71AL, who upgraded to General, and Mike Tracy, KC1SX, and John Bee, N1GNV who upgraded to Extra.

Perhaps as a point of pride, more than a few hams hustled in the weeks remaining before April 15 in an effort to upgrade under the old rules. One was ARRL Field and Educational Services Manager Rosalie White, WA1STO. Another was Don Wegger, WD8OTJ—now "interim AE"—who wrote ARRL HQ to say the League's code tapes did the trick for him after

years of struggling with the code. "I hold nothing against a 5 WPM Extra, but for my own personal satisfaction I did it the 'old way,'" he wrote.

FCC TO GENERALS: ADVANCED SUBBANDS ARE OFF LIMITS

The FCC says a lot of newly upgraded General class licensees have begun asking if they may operate in the current Advanced class subbands now that the new amateur rules are in place. "The answer is: Absolutely not," said the Bill Cross, W3TN, of the FCC's Public Safety and Private Wireless Division. "No privileges changed for any license class."

Cross pointed out that the Advanced class license did not cease to exist under restructuring, which went into effect April 15, although the FCC no longer accepts applications for Novice or Advanced class licenses. He said current Generals do not earn Advanced class privileges until they upgrade to Amateur Extra class, at which point they earn both Advanced and Extra privileges.

The FCC also says General class operators may hold only Group C (1x3) or Group D (2x3) call signs, as it was under the old rules. Generals are not entitled to apply for or hold Group B (1x2) call signs under the new rules.

Cross cautioned newly upgraded licensees to check the revised Part 97 rules carefully to make sure they're not operating beyond their privileges. "Now that they gotten the license, it's time to look at the real rules," he said.

Amateurs further are reminded that in order to apply for upgraded volunteer examiner privileges or for a vanity call sign reflecting new license status, a licensee first must have been issued an upgraded license grant by the FCC. Interim privileges conveyed by a Certificate of Successful Completion of Examination or CSCE are insufficient for these purposes.

Revised FCC Part 97 rules are available on the ARRL Web site at <http://www.arrl.org/field/regulations/news/bert97/>.

The FCC this week released the Errata to its December 30, 1999, Report and Order on restructuring. The Errata incorporate minor errors contained in the original R&O and already made in the version of the new rules that appeared in The Federal Register earlier this year.

From ARRL Letter

Notes:

* New edition of 'The ARRL's FCC Rule Book available: The rules have changed significantly, and The ARRL's FCC Rule Book (12th Ed) reflects the realities of the regulatory world. Edited by John Hermessee, NIKB, The FCC Rule Book incorporates the complete text of Part 97, including all changes that became effective on April 15, 2000. It has details on license restructuring and everything you'll ever need to know about the Universal Licensing System (at least until the FCC changes it) plus RF exposure guidelines and other technical standards. There's also a greatly enhanced chapter on repeaters, crossband operation and linking. The ARRL's FCC Rule Book is \$12. Order Item 7857 Visit ARRL Web or call toll-free 888-277-5289.

Public Service:

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National Hurricane Conference to feature Amateur Radio Role of Amateur Radio in Hurricane Communications" will be one of the featured training sessions at the National Hurricane Conference in New Orleans April 1 ~, 1:30~5 PM. Any Amateur Radio operator wishing to attend this session may do so without registering for the conference. The conference is being held Apr. 17-21 at the Hyatt Regency, 500 Poydras Plaza, New Orleans, Louisiana For further details, visit <http://www.HurricaneCon.com>. Session organizer Dr T Michael Carter, N9PDK, has lined up several speakers including representatives from the Hurricane Watch Net, the American Red Cross National Disaster Operations Center, and ARRL Field Organization officials from Freda, Louisiana and Mississippi. ~Steve Ewald, WYFX

PRB-1

* New York PRB-1 effort gets companion Senate bill: A companion PRB-1 bill, S. 7324, has been introduced in the New York State Senate by Sen Dale M Volker of Buffalo. The Senate measure mirrors the assembly bill, A. 9947, submitted earlier. ARRL Hudson Director Frank Fallon, N2FF, urges amateurs to write their state senators and assembly representatives in support of A. 9947 and S. 7324. Proponents are hoping for a hearing in the Local Government Committee. A directory of senators and representatives is available at <http://www.assembly.state.ny.us> and <http://www.senate.state.ny.us>. Sample letters and links to the state legislators are also accessible at

<http://www.arrrl-hudson.org>. -Frank Fallon, N2FF, ~4a The Hudson Loop

* Rhode Island PRB-1 bill in committee: The Rhode Island PRB-1 bill, S-2304, has been moved to the General Assembly's Corporation Committee. The amateur spearheading the bill, Hank Gdtk, WA2CCN, of Lincoln, is urging Ocean State amateurs to write their state senators and representatives urging support for the measure. The bill's sponsor, Sen Jonathan F Oster, is stressing Amateur Radio's history of emergency communications. The bill, as submitted, has a minimum 50-foot tower height. Gdtk is attempting to muster support for a 75-foot minimum. Rhode Island hams may contact Gdtk at hgrilk@worldnet.att.net or write him at t West Butterfly Way, Uncoln, RI 02865

From ARRL letter: In BRIEF

Local Notes:

Real Hams Are ?

In 1928 Paul Segal, W9EE, originated the Amateur's Code. his CODE is simply six (6) words identifying the HOBBY

Considerate, Loyal, Progressive, Friendly, Balanced & Patriotic.

Today we are fortunate to have outstanding people in Amateur Radio that still emulate these basic values; I believe they are the "REAL HAMS"...

People like Eramitt, K9YKX; Maffen, W9MA; George, WB9FAD & Dan, K9YJW. Here are the quiet, but always there and willing to help out or just offer encouragement.

They are the "NO BADGE" required ambassadors of AMATEUR RADIO.

I have never heard a cross word or argument from people like them, they are always PROACTIVE with a CAN DO attitude. This is a rare commodity these days. In a time when Ham radio is changing so much, we all need to take note of the examples of

"REAL HAMS" in our community and make our hobby the FUN that it used to be. Let's make the next 100 years a time of pride, with lots of interactive achievement and friendly times. All us should seek out these "Real Hams" and learn from their examples

I see TV commercials saying "a Brain is a terrible thing to waste". Perhaps our motto could

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follow these same lines of thought.....

"An Amateur Radio Person is a terrible thing to Waste."

I'm sure that the above list could be longer and hope that some day I will be able to live up to their standards.

Courtesy Chuck W9IH

Field Day 2000

Field Day Pins

Once again the ARRL is offering special Field Day 2000 pins for participating in Field Day 2000. If you plan to attend the June 24th. & 25th. outing and want a souvenir for your efforts bring \$5.00 to the May meeting. These pins look great on your ham radio hat or on the collar of a shirt. Jack Parker, W8ISH will collect the funds and order the pins from ARRL W8ISH

Field Day 2000

What's so big about Field Day? it's just another weekend of antennas, coax and radios.

Of course there is the food from sun up to sun down. Breakfast at Ed's Trading Post in Nineveh starts Field Day sunny side up. Then we work our way to the chili lunch. Join the family for a Saturday night pitch-in and finish the 24-hour radio marathon with biscuits and gravy Sunday morning. Whew! Who knows, filling our bellies with food might stimulate the brain to absorb hundreds of call signs and QSO's.

I was nervous the first time I sat down to copy a Field Day CW contact. My fears quickly eased when I realized I wasn't expected to copy the 20 wpm code by myself. I actually assisted a more experienced operator with logging the

many contacts he was getting. Two points per contact. Even more if we powered the rig off a generator. Working SSB was even easier.

Field Day 1966 was my first introduction to Amateur TV. Yep! Playing TV with no commercials. The payoff for making just one ATV contact was a whopping 100 points. Not bad for watching a bunch of Indianapolis hams acting goofy on camera. Of course we responded in kind and showed them just how goofy we could get in Whiteland. That's what makes Amateur Radio and Field Day so great. Experiencing old and new technology while earning points in a national contest. It's also designed to practice emergency communications under field conditions. Kind of like going to JR's house after a tornado knocks his tower, trees and power down. That last weekend in June each year has taught me more about antennas and radios than any test booklet. It's hands on experience... and you won't get it sitting at home watching TV. Helping to string an inverted-V antenna or clamping a set of beams together gets to the core of ham radio.

Come feast on the food and frequencies this field Day. Make Field Day 2000 the first of many successful field days you will attend in the new century.

see you there -W8ISH

The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club

Membership

The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club is based in Franklin, Indiana. Membership is open to all amateur radio operators and other interested Parties

Club meetings are conducted on the third Saturday of each month in the training room of the Johnson County Emergency Operations Center at 1100 Hospital Rd. in Franklin, In.

Membership dues are \$18.00 per-year for full membership. Other types of memberships are available.

Amateur Radio Operator License testing is offered following the meetings during the months of March through November.

The club maintains an open repeater in the 2-meter band at 146.835 MHz. Each full member has access to the repeater and autopatch.

Membership dues payments and changes of address should be sent to the Club Treasurer at the address listed below.

Newsletter

The Spark GAP is the monthly club newsletter.

articles and information that would be of interest to the club members are welcome. Information may be submitted by E-mail or by mailing to the club address listed below.

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Club meeting Sat May 20 at EOC

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Indianapolis, In. 46229

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Mailbox